

Claims

What is claimed is:

- 1     1. A debris gathering and pickup tool structured for use in  
2     gathering debris contained within a selected area, and grasping  
3     and lifting the debris for subsequent disposal, the debris  
4     gathering and pickup tool comprising:
  - 5       a) a gathering portion structured with a substantially  
6       flattened gathering head and an elongated handle, wherein the  
7       gathering head is rigidly coupleable to the elongated handle at  
8       a pre-selected downward angle with respect to a longitudinal  
9       axis of the elongated handle; and
  - 10      b) a grasping portion structured with a substantially  
11      flattened grasping member fixedly coupled to a user operable  
12      grasping sleeve at an angle substantially equal to the downward  
13      angle established between the gathering head and the  
14      longitudinal axis of the elongated handle;
  - 15      c) with the grasping portion arranged for being slidably  
16      coupleable by the user to the gathering portion so that the  
17      grasping portion may be selectively moved by the user between a  
18      retracted position, wherein the gathering portion may be  
19      employed for gathering debris and forming one or more bunches,  
20      and a second grasping position, wherein debris may be grasped  
21      between a second surface of the gathering head and a first

22 surface of the grasping member, for subsequent lifting and  
23 disposal.

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1 2. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2 claim 1, wherein the grasping portion is slidably coupled to  
3 the elongated handle of the gathering portion by sliding the  
4 grasping sleeve over the elongated handle such that the handle  
5 passes through the center of the grasping sleeve.

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1 3. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2 claim 2, wherein a downward angle substantially in the range of  
3 15 to 60 degrees is established between each of:

4 a) a plane of the gathering head and the longitudinal axis of  
5 the elongated handle; and

6 b) a plane of the grasping member and a longitudinal axis of  
7 the grasping sleeve.

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1 4. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2 claim 3, further including a locking mechanism that is  
3 activated by a user and structured for maintaining the grasping  
4 sleeve at a user selected position along the elongated handle,  
5 inclusively between the retracted position and the grasping  
6 position, until the locking mechanism is released by the user.

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1       5. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2       claim 1, wherein at least one of:

3       a) the gathering portion is provided with the gathering head  
4       rigidly coupleable to the elongated handle in a removable  
5       fashion, such that any of a provided plurality of differing  
6       gathering heads may be selectively coupled by the user to the  
7       elongated handle to form a gathering portion; and

8       b) the grasping portion is provided with a grasping member  
9       that is rigidly coupleable to the grasping sleeve in a  
10      removable fashion, such that the grasping member may be  
11      detached and separated from the grasping sleeve.

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1       6. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2       claim 5, wherein the plurality of gathering heads of the  
3       gathering portion includes at least one of:

4       a) a rake head; and  
5       b) a broom head.

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1       7. A debris gathering and pickup tool, comprising:

2       a) a gathering portion, including  
3           i) a flattened gathering head;  
4           ii) an elongated handle; and  
5           iii) a coupling arrangement for coupling the gathering head  
6       to the elongated handle, the coupling arrangement effecting the

7 coupling such that the gathering head is attached to the  
8 elongated handle at a pre-selected downward angle with respect  
9 to a longitudinal axis of the elongated handle; and  
10 b) a grasping portion, including  
11 i) a flattened grasping member;  
12 ii) a user operated grasping sleeve, which is structured  
13 with the grasping portion fixed thereto at an angle  
14 substantially equal to or less than the downward angle  
15 established between the gathering head and the longitudinal  
16 axis of the elongated handle;  
17 c) wherein the grasping portion is further structured for  
18 being slidably coupleable, by the user, to the elongated handle  
19 such that the grasping portion may be selectively moved by the  
20 user to a selected position along the elongated handle between  
21 a retracted position, wherein the gathering portion may be  
22 employed for gathering debris and forming the bunches, and a  
23 second distal grasping position wherein debris may be grasped  
24 between a second surface of the gathering head and a first  
25 surface of the grasping member, enabling a lifting and  
26 subsequent disposal of gathered debris.

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1 8. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2 claim 7, wherein the downward angle established between the  
3 gathering head and the elongated handle, as well as the

4       grasping member and the grasping sleeve, is substantially in  
5       the range of 15 to 60 degrees.

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1       9. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2       claim 8, wherein the downward angle is substantially 30  
3       degrees.

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1       10. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2       claim 8, wherein the downward angle is adjustable by the user.

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1       11. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2       claim 7, wherein the slidable coupling of the grasping sleeve  
3       to the gathering portion is realized by the elongated handle  
4       being placed coaxially through a center of the grasping sleeve  
5       of the grasping portion, so that a longitudinal axis of the  
6       grasping sleeve is substantially aligned with the longitudinal  
7       axis of the elongated handle.

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1       12. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2       claim 7, further including a locking mechanism that is user  
3       operable for enabling the user to maintain the grasping sleeve  
4       in one of an inverted position or the retracted position, so  
5       that the grasping sleeve, while slidably coupled to the

6 elongated handle, will not slide or otherwise substantially  
7 move until the locking mechanism is released by the user.

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1 13. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2 claim 12, wherein the locking mechanism further enables the  
3 user to maintain the grasping sleeve at any user selected  
4 position along the elongated handle, inclusively between the  
5 retracted position and the grasping position.

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1 14. The debris gathering and pickup tool in accordance with  
2 claim 7, wherein the grasping portion is slidably fixed to the  
3 elongated handle portion and the coupling between the grasping  
4 member and the grasping sleeve is structured such that the  
5 grasping member can be detached from the grasping sleeve when  
6 not needed for grasping and picking up debris.